

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claim 1: (currently amended): An information exchange support apparatus for supporting exchange of information through a network, the information exchange support apparatus comprising:

~~a reception means for receiving~~ unit which receives exchange request information containing information to be exchanged and information for identifying an exchanging party;

~~an exchange determination means for determining~~ unit which determines whether or not information exchange is permitted using the received exchange request information; and

~~a transmission means for transmitting~~ unit which transmits the information to be exchanged to the exchanging party if the exchange determination ~~means~~ unit determines that information exchange is permitted,

wherein, if the exchange request information from the mutual exchanging parties is already received, the exchange determination ~~means~~ unit determines that information exchange is permitted.

Claim 2 (currently amended): The information exchange support apparatus according to claim 1,

wherein, if the types of information to be exchanged contained in the exchange request information from the mutual exchanging parties match, the exchange determination ~~means~~ unit determines that information exchange is permitted.

Claim 3 (currently amended): The information exchange support apparatus according to claim 1,

wherein, if the types and the contents of information to be exchanged contained in the exchange request information from the mutual exchanging parties match, the exchange determination ~~means~~ unit determines that information exchange is permitted.

Claim 4 (currently amended): The information exchange support apparatus according to claim 1,

wherein, if the types or the contents of information to be exchanged match a predetermined type or content of information to be exchanged, the exchange determination ~~means~~ unit determines that information exchange is permitted.

Claim 5 (currently amended): The information exchange support apparatus according to claim 1,

wherein the exchange request information contains information indicating the type of information to be exchanged requested for the exchanging party, and

wherein, if the types of information to be exchanged contained in the exchange request information from the mutual exchanging parties match the requested type for the exchanging party, the exchange determination~~means~~ unit determines that information exchange is permitted.

Claim 6 (currently amended): The information exchange support apparatus according to claim 1,

wherein the exchange request information contains information indicating the type and the content of information to be exchanged requested for the exchanging party, and

wherein, if the types and the contents of information to be exchanged contained in the exchange request information from the mutual exchanging parties match the requested type and content for the exchanging party, the exchange determination~~means~~ unit determines that information exchange is permitted.

Claim 7 (currently amended): The information exchange support apparatus according to claim 1,

wherein the exchange request information contains content report information indicating the content of

information to be exchanged contained in the exchange request information, and

wherein, if the content report information matches the content of the received information to be exchanged, the exchange determination—~~means~~ unit determines that information exchange is permitted.

Claim 8 (currently amended): The information exchange support apparatus according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 7~~ claim 1,

wherein the reception—~~means~~ unit receives the exchange request information using an electronic mail system or a Web page.

Claim 9 (currently amended): The information exchange support apparatus according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 8~~ claim 1,

wherein the transmission—~~means~~ unit transmits the information to be exchanged using an electronic mail system or a Web page.

Claim 10 (currently amended): The information exchange support apparatus according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 9~~ claim 1, further comprising:

a preliminary disclosure ~~means for~~ unit which  
~~preliminarily disclosing discloses~~ the information to be  
exchanged for the exchanging party,

wherein, if consent information indicating exchange  
consent is received from the mutual exchanging parties  
after the preliminary disclosure ~~means~~ unit preliminarily  
discloses the information to be exchanged, the exchange  
determination ~~means~~ unit determines that information  
exchange is permitted.

Claim 11 (currently amended): The information  
exchange support apparatus according to claim 10,

wherein the exchange request information contains  
preliminary disclosure and consent required/not required  
information indicating whether or not exchange consent is  
required, of information to be exchanged of the exchanging  
party, and

wherein, if the consent required/not required  
information indicates required, the preliminary disclosure  
~~means~~ unit preliminarily discloses the information to be  
exchanged for the exchanging party.

Claim 12 (currently amended): The information  
exchange support apparatus according to claim 10 ~~or 11~~,

wherein the preliminary disclosure ~~means~~ unit  
discloses the information to be exchanged in a mode in

which the exchanging party cannot save all information to be exchanged.

Claim 13 (currently amended): The information exchange support apparatus according to claim 12,

wherein the preliminary disclosure—~~means~~ unit discloses the information to be exchanged using an electronic mail system or a Web page.

Claim 14 (currently amended): The information exchange support apparatus according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 13~~ claim 1,

wherein, when information exchange is executed at least among three parties, if the exchange request information of all parties are all already received, the exchange determination—~~means~~ unit determines that information exchange is permitted.

Claim 15 (currently amended): An information exchange support program for causing a computer to function as an information exchange support apparatus according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 14~~ claim 1.

Claim 16 (original): An information exchange support method for supporting exchange of information through a

network, the information exchange support apparatus comprising:

a reception step of receiving exchange request information containing information to be exchanged and information for identifying an exchanging party;

an exchange determination step of determining whether or not information exchange is permitted using the received exchange request information; and

a transmission step of transmitting the information to be exchanged to the exchanging party if the exchange determination step determines that information exchange is permitted,

wherein, if the exchange request information from the mutual exchanging parties is already received, the exchange determination steps determines that information exchange is permitted.